

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SOFIA 01036 171255Z
ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SOFIA 1036

STADIS////////////////////////////////

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, OVIP, SCUL, BU (ZHIVKOVA, LYUDMILLA)
SUBJECT: ZHIVKOVA VISIT

REF: A) STATE 109465? B) SOFIA 1015; C) SOFIA 1004

1. ZHIVKOVA WASHINGTON PROGRAM AS SET FORTH REF A APPEARS TO US GENERALLY EXCELLENT AND WE ARE MOST GRATEFUL TO ALL CONCERNED. WE SUGGEST ONLY ONE AMENDMENT: THAT OFFICE CALL ON NANCY HANKS BE MOVED UP TO FIRST DAY OF PROGRAM. IF THIS NOT CONVENIENT, SUGGEST SOME OTHER WAY BE FOUND FOR HOST AND GUEST TO MEET AT LEAST BRIEFLY FIRST DAY. ASSUME THAT SIGNING CEREMONY OUTLINED IN PARA 2 REF A WOULD BE IN PRESENCE OF USIA DIRECTOR REINHARDT OR COMPARABLY SENIOR OFFICIAL IF NOT POSSIBLE TO HAVE IN PRESENCE OF CABINET MEMBER. WE NOW AWAIT OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS PROGRAM DIRECTLY WITH ZHIVKOVA AND WILL FORWARD HER COMMENTS IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER.

2. RE PROGRAM IN OTHER CITIES. NEW YORK MAY BE SOMETHING OF A PROBLEM. MFA SAYS IT HAS NO INFORMATION AT ALL AS TO WHAT PROGRAM HOVING OF METROPOLITAN HAS PREPARED FOR HER IN NEW YORK. REQUEST DEPT CONTACT HOVING ASAP TO LEARN DETAILS AND BE PREPARED TO FILL IN ANY GAPS THAT SEEM APPARENT. IN ANY CASE, WE CONSIDER IT IMPERATIVE THAT OFFICIAL
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OF SUITABLE RANK BE ON HAND IN NEW YORK TO WELCOME ZHIVKOVA ON ARRIVAL (PRESUMABLY JUNE 7) AND BELIEVE THAT EITHER EUR/EE DIRECTOR ANDREWS OR CU/EE DIRECTOR RICHMOND WOULD BE APPROPRIATE.

3. WE WERE TOLD TODAY THAT ZHIVKOVA LIKELY TO REMAIN ONLY TEN DAYS IN US. DEPT THEREFORE SHOULD SCRAP PLANS FOR SAN

FRANCISCO BUT PLANNING SHOULD PROCEED FOR VISIT TO ANOTHER CITY FOLLOWING WASHINGTON. IN VIEW OF ONGOING CULTURAL LINKS WITH BULGARIA WE BELIEVE PITTSBURGH WOULD BE MOST APPROPRIATE. AS IT HAPPENED, WALTER KOLAR AND PENKA FRENCH, DIRECTOR AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY TAMBURITZANS INSTITUTE OF FOLK ARTS, PITTSBURGH, ARE CURRENTLY IN SOFIA AT PERSONAL INVITATION OF ZHIVKOVA TO OBSERVE THIRD CONGRESS OF BULGARIAN CULTURE. TWO WEEKS AGO THEY (TOGETHER WITH MRS. FRENCH'S BROTHER, NICHOLAS JORDANOFF) WERE DECORATED BY BULGARIAN AMBASSADOR LYUBOMIR POPOV WITH ORDER OF KYRIL AND METODII, FIRST AMERICANS TO BE SO HONORED, FOR THEIR ACTIVITIES IN PRESERVATION OF AND SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH IN BALKAN FOLK CULTURES. THEY WILL BE ZHIVKOVA'S GUESTS AT DINNER THIS WEEK. KOLAR AND FRENCH PROMISE THAT IF ZHIVKOVA VISITS PITTSBURGH, THEY WILL ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY TO ENSURE ALL-STOPS-OUT TREATMENT. THIS SEEMS BEST SOLUTION TO PROBLEM OF POST-WASHINGTON VISIT, PERHAPS WITH INSERTION OF DAY IN WILLIAMSBURG BETWEEN WASHINGTON AND PITTSBURGH.

4. FULL BIO DATA SHOULD BE AVAILABLE FROM INR/OIL/B. ZHIVKOVA SPEAKS FAIR AMOUNT OF ENGLISH BUT WE UNDERSTAND BULGARIAN EMBASSY WILL HAVE SENIOR OFFICER ALONG AS HER INTERPRETER (PROBABLY AMBASSADOR POPOV). AS CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE ON ART AND CULTURE, ZHIVKOVA OVERSEES NOT ONLY "ARTISTIC AND ESTHETIC POLICY" FOR GOB (SETTING NORMS, DEFINING WHAT IS PERMITTED INTELLECTUALS AND WHAT IS NOT, ETC.), BUT ALSO SUPERVISES ALL INFORMATION MEDIA INCLUDING PRESS, RADIO, TV, MAGAZINES, ETC. AS DAUGHTER OF CHIEF OF STATE AND CHAIRMAN OF BULGARIAN COMMUNIST PARTY, SHE HAS UNQUESTIONED CONFIDENTIAL

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(THOUGH UNDEFINED) POLITICAL POWER AS WELL, AND WHILE TALKING TO HER IS NOT QUITE THE SAME THING AS TALKING TO TODOR ZHIVKOV, SHE IN UNDOUBTEDLY THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS OF COMMUNICATIONS TO HIM THAN ANY OTHER VISITOR WE ARE LIKELY TO HAVE FOR SOME TIME.

5. ALTHOUGH HER TITLE IS CHAIRMAN AND NOT MINISTER, IN FACT SHE IS A MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND OF THE BUREAU OF THE COUNCIL, WHICH FUNCTIONS AS A KIND OF INNER OR SUPER CABINET. AS POINTED OUT REF B, SHE IS RUMORED TO HAVE PLAYED A ROLE IN OUSTER OF BORIS VELCHEV, FORMER BCP NUMBER TWO, AND AS POINTED OUT REF C, THERE IS VERY GOOD CHANCE SHE WILL SOON BE ADDED TO POLITBURO. THE BOTTOM LINE IS, ZHIVKOVA HAS FULL POWER AND ABILITY TO BLOCK OR FACILITATE US CULTURAL PRESENCE AND PROGRAMMING IN BULGARIA, AND ALSO CAN EXERCISE INFLUENCE ON HER FATHER WHO IS BOTH CHIEF OF STATE AND UNDISPUTED HEAD OF THE RULING PARTY.
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NOTE BY OC/T: REFERENCE A IS APPARENTLY INCORRECT.

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